

Conservation Halton

## Accessibility Plan

July 2019



# Integrated Accessibility Standards

## 1. Purpose:

Under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* all public and private sector organizations must meet the requirements of accessibility standards established by regulation. This policy establishes the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation in the areas of Employment, Information and Communication for Conservation Halton in accordance with Ontario Regulation 191/11. It aligns with the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility's intent to "streamline, align and phase-in accessibility requirements and allow for progress on accessibility and reduce the regulatory burden for obligated organizations". This regulation came into force July 1, 2011.

## 2. Scope and Responsibilities

This policy has been drafted in accordance with the IASR and addresses how Conservation Halton achieves accessibility through meeting the Regulation's requirements. It provides the overall strategic direction that we will follow to provide accessibility supports to Ontarians with disabilities.

The requirements of the IASR include:

- Establishment, implementation, maintenance and documentation of a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Regulation;
- Incorporation of accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities;
- Training; and
- Other specific requirements under the Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation Standards and Public Spaces.

## 3. Policy Statement and Organizational Commitment

Conservation Halton is committed and guided by the four core principles of Dignity, Independence, Integration and Equal Opportunity and supports the full inclusion of persons as set out in *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

Conservation Halton shall use every effort to ensure that we meet the needs of people with disabilities, in a timely manner, through the implementation of this policy and accessibility plan.

## 4. Definitions:

**"Accessible Formats"** may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities;

**"Accommodation"** means the special arrangement made or assistance provided so that persons with disabilities can participate in the experiences available to persons without disabilities. Accommodation will vary depending on the person's unique needs;

**"Communication Supports"** may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications;

**“Communications”** means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent or received;

**“Conversion Ready”** means an electronic or digital format that facilitates conversion into an accessible format;

**“Designated Public Sector Organization”** means every municipality and every person or organization listed in Column 1 of Table 1 of Ontario Regulation 146/10 (Public Bodies and Commission Public Bodies — Definitions) made under the *Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006*

**“IAP”** means Individualized Accommodation Plan

**“Information”** includes data, facts and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that conveys meaning.

**“Internet Website”** means a collection of related web pages, images, videos or other digital assets that are addressed relative to a common Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) and is accessible to the public.

**“Mobility Aid”** means a device used to facilitate the transport, in a seated posture, of a person with a disability.

**“Mobility Assistive Device”** means a cane, walker, wheelchair, scooter or similar aid.

**“New Internet Website”** means either a website with a new domain name or a website with an existing domain name undergoing a significant refresh.

**“Redeployment”** means the reassignment of employees to other departments or jobs within the organization as an alternative to layoff, when a particular job or department has been eliminated.

**“Unconvertible”** means

- (a) If it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications;
- (b) The technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

**“Web Content Accessibility Guidelines”** means the world wide web consortium recommendation, dated December 2008, entitled “Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0.

## 5. General Provisions

This section covers the general requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR).

### Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Conservation Halton’s Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines a phased-in strategy to prevent and remove barriers and addresses the current and future requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). Conservation Halton will report annually on the progress and implementation of the plan, post the information on our website and will provide it in alternative formats upon request. The plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years.

## **Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities**

Conservation Halton will use accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practical to do so (in which case, if requested we will provide an explanation).

## **Training**

In accordance with the IASR, Conservation Halton will take the following steps to ensure employees are appropriately trained:

- Determine the training requirements of the IASR and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to people with disabilities and ensure it is provided to all team members, volunteers and persons developing organizational policies;
- Ensure third party contractors and vendors who provide goods, services or facilities on Conservation Halton's behalf have received appropriate training;
- Ensure training is provided to the above noted individuals as soon as practicable;
- Maintain training dates and the number of individuals trained;
- Ensure training is provided on any related policy changes

**Required Legislative Compliance Date:** January 1, 2015

**Completion Date:** January 1, 2015

## **6. Information and Communication Standard**

Conservation Halton will create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities.

If Conservation Halton determines that it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications or the technology to convert the information or communication is not readily available, we will be obligated to provide the person that requires the information with:

- a) an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and
- b) a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

## **Accessible Emergency Information**

If Conservations Halton prepares emergency procedures, plans or public safety information and makes the information available to the public, we shall provide the information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request.

**Required Legislative Compliance Date:** January 1, 2012

**Completion Date:** January 1, 2012

## Feedback

Conservation Halton has process in place for receiving and responding to feedback and will ensure that those processes are provided in accessible formats and with communication supports upon request. We will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

**Required Legislative Compliance Date:** January 1, 2015

**Completion Date:** January 1, 2015

## Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Conservation Halton shall provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities:

- a) Upon request in a timely manner that takes into account the persons' accessibility needs due to a disability;
- b) At a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons;
- c) Consult with the person making the request and determine suitability of an accessible format or communication support;
- d) Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

**Required Legislative Compliance Date:** January 1, 2016

**Completion Date:** January 1, 2016

## Website Accessibility

Conservation Halton shall take the following steps to make its internet website and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA. By January 1, 2014, any new web content will conform with WCAG 2.0 Level A. By January 1, 2021 all internet website and web content will conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA.

**Required Legislative Compliance Date:**

New Content (WCAG 2.0 Level A) - January 1, 2014

All Content (WCAG 2.0 Level AA), except for exclusions set out in the IASR – January 1, 2021

**Completion Date:**

New Content - January 1, 2014

All Content – In progress as of July 2019

## 7. Employment Standard

Conservation Halton is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. The Accessible Employment Standard builds upon the existing requirements under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* in relation to how to accommodate individuals with disabilities throughout the job application process and the employment relationship. It applies in respect to employees and does not apply to volunteers and other non-paid individuals.

## **Recruitment**

Conservation Halton shall notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities:

- During the recruitment process when job applicants are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process;
- If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, Conservation Halton shall consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation that takes into account the applicant's disability;

**Required Legislative Compliance Date:** January 1, 2016

**Completion Date:** January 1, 2014

## **Employee Notification**

Conservation Halton shall inform its employees of its policies used to support its employees with disabilities, including but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability:

- As required to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment;
- Whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

**Required Legislative Compliance Date:** January 1, 2016

**Completion Date:** January 1, 2016

## **Accessible Formats**

In addition and where an employee with a disability requests it, Conservation Halton will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for:

- information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job;
- information that is generally available to employees in the workplace; and
- consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

**Required Legislative Compliance Date:** January 1, 2016

**Completion Date:** January 1, 201

## **Individual Accommodation Plan**

Conservation Halton shall have in place a written process for the developing a documented individual accommodation plan for employees with a disability. Process to include:

- The employee's participation in the development of the IAP;
- Assessment on an individual basis;
- Identification of accommodations to be provided;
- Timelines for the provision of accommodations;
- Conservation Halton may request an evaluation by outside medical or other expert, at our expense, to assist with determining accommodation and how to achieve accommodation;
- Steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information;

- Frequency with which the IAP will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done;
- If denied, the reasons for denial are to be provided to the employee;
- A format that takes into account the employee's disability needs;
- If requested, any information regarding accessible formats and communication supports provided;
- Identification of any other accommodation that is to be provided.

**Required Legislative Compliance Date:** January 1, 2016

**Completion Date:** January 1, 2016

### **Return to Work**

Conservation Halton will have in place a return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodation in order to return to work. Such processes must be documented and must outline the steps that Conservation Halton will take to facilitate the return to work and include an individual accommodation plan.

**Required Legislative Compliance Date:** January 1, 2016

**Completion Date:** January 1, 2016

### **Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement, and Redeployment**

Conservation Halton will take into account the accommodation needs and/or individual accommodation plans of employees when:

- Using performance management processes;
- Providing career development and advancement information;
- Using redeployment procedures.

**Required Legislative Compliance Date:** January 1, 2016

**Completion Date:** January 1, 2016

### **Workplace Emergency Response Information**

Conservation Halton shall provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability:

- If the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the employer is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability;
- If the employee who receives an individual workplace emergency response information requires assistance and with the employee's consent, Conservation Halton shall provide the workplace emergency information to the person designated by the Conservation Halton to provide assistance to the employee;
- As soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability;



- Review the individualized workplace emergency response information when the employee moves to a different location in the organization, when overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed and when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

**Required Legislative Compliance Date:** January 1, 2012

**Completion Date:** January 1, 2012

## **8. Public Spaces**

Conservation Halton shall incorporate accessibility into public spaces on its premises that are newly constructed or redeveloped on and after January 1, 2017.

Conservation Halton shall also provide maintenance and restoration of public spaces by ensuring procedures are in place for preventative and emergency maintenance of accessible elements in public spaces and that procedures are in place for dealing with temporary disruptions when accessible elements required under this section are not in working order.

**Required Legislative Compliance Date:** January 1, 2017

**Completion Date:** January 1, 2017

## **9. Regulatory Requirements**

An Administrative Monetary Penalties scheme is established under the AODA. The scheme will allow a director or a designate to issue an order against a person, organization or corporation to pay a penalty amount as a result of non-compliance with the AODA or the accessibility standards. The largest penalty amount that can be issued to an individual or an organization that is not a corporation is \$50,000.

Use of administrative monetary penalties will be considered an avenue of last resort when all other compliance assistance and improvement options have been exhausted

The License Appeal Tribunal will hear appeals from organizations of director's orders, but not individual complaints. Individuals who feel their human rights have not been met would continue to complain to the Ontario Human Rights Commission

Alternative accessible formats of this document are available upon request.